

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1035
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 4055

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, ET, SO, IT
SUBJ: FORLANI INTERVIEW ON THE HORN

1. FOLLOWING VISIT OF ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FELEKE
GEDLE-GIORGIS (ON WHICH WE WILL BE REPORTING SEPARATELY),
FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI GAVE INTERVIEW, PUBLISHED MARCH 3
IN CORRIERE DELLA SERA, IN WHICH HE DESCRIBED THE
ETHIOPIANS AS STILL INTRANSIGENT, APPROVED THE BRZEZINSKI
STATEMENT ON SOVIET ACTIVITY IN THE HORN AND SALT, AND
CRITICIZED THE US FOR NOT TAKING SUCH A STAND EARLIER.
SPECIFICALLY, FORLANI MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:
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-- THE ETHIOPIANS REMAIN INTRANSIGENT ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS
AND WILL NOT BEGIN TALKS UNTIL ETHIOPIAN SOVEREIGNTY
IS REESTABLISHED THROUGHOUT NATIONAL TERRITORY. FONMIN
REASSURED FORLANI THAT BORDERS WOULD NOT BE CROSSED.
-- THE ETHIOPIANS ARE "VERY SATISFIED" WITH THE VISIT
OF US REPRESENTATIVE DAVID AARON. THEY REGRET THAT

ITALY HAS NOT SO FAR CONDEMNED THE AGGRESSION AGAINST ETHIOPIA. ITALIANS EXPLAINED THEY HAD NOT DONE SO BECAUSE THEY WANT TO BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH BOTH SIDES.

-- THE ETHIOPIANS SAID THAT NO ONE SHOULD DOUBT THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM SOVIETS AND CUBANS.

-- THE ETHIOPIANS OPPOSE RECOURSE TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND CONTINUE TO INSIST ON THE OAU AS THE FORUM FOR PEACE EFFORTS.

-- AS TO ERITREA, THE ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT ONCE PEACE IS REESTABLISHED THE GOVERNMENT CAN PUT INTO EFFECT THE POSSIBILITY OF SELF-GOVERNMENT ENVISIONED BY THE CHARTER OF THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION.

-- AS TO BRZEZINSKI'S STATEMENT, IT IS "VERY GOOD, OF TARDY," AND IS IN FACT WHAT THE ITALIANS HAVE BEEN ASKING FOR SINCE OCTOBER, THAT IS, TO LINK THE SITUATION IN THE HORN TO THE SALT TALKS. THE AMERICANS HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF SAYING CLEARLY TO THE SOVIETS THAT THEY CANNOT MEET TOGETHER TO REDUCE TENSIONS IF THE SOVIETS ARE STIRRING UP LOCAL CONFLICTS ALL AROUND. THE PART WHICH ITALIANS AND OTHER EUROPEANS MUST PLAY IS TO PUSH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE US TO CONSIDER HOW VERY DANGEROUS THE WHOLE SITUATION IS.

-- IF THE AMERICANS HAD AT THE BEGINNING INSISTED ON CONFRONTING THE SITUATION, EMPHASIZING ITS RISKS, RECOGNIZING ITS COMPLEXITY, PERHAPS PUSHING MORE FOR NEGOTIATIONS, IT MIGHT HAVE PERMITTED THE SOMALIS TO

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WITHDRAW WITH MORE DIGNITY AND PERHAPS THE CUBAN INVOLVEMENT MIGHT NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE.

2. COMMENT: WE ARE PLANNING TO REGISTER (AT MFA WORKING LEVEL) EMBASSY'S SURPRISE AT FOREIGN MINISTER'S EQUATING US AND SOVIET ROLES, AS WELL AS HIS IMPLICATION THAT WE DO NOT CONSIDER THE CONFLICT VERY DANGEROUS, THAT WE HAVE NOT BEEN VIGOROUS ENOUGH IN PUSHING FOR A SOLUTION, AND THAT CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IS RELATED TO WHAT FORLANI CONSIDERS TO BE OUR INSUFFICIENT EFFORTS. IN CONVERSATION EARLIER TODAY, WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS WERE REGISTERING EMBARRASSMENT ABOUT INTERVIEW.HOLMES

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